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CONGRESSMAN BOYD FIGHTS FOR DISABLED MILITARY RETIREES AND VETERANS

WASHINGTON, DC: Last night, Congressman Allen Boyd (D- North Florida) signed a discharge petition **to force a House vote on H.R. 303, the Retired Pay Restoration Act of 2003, of which Congressman Boyd is a co-sponsor.**

H.R. 303 is a bipartisan proposal to immediately authorize full payment of both retirement pay and disability compensation to half a million disabled military retirees. Currently, veterans who retire with 20 years of honorable service, and who also have a service-related disability, are not permitted to collect both retirement and disability pay concurrently.

This petition on concurrent receipt is the only way to get this measure considered, which has been bottled up in committee since January. Even though it has 320 cosponsors in the House, both Republicans and Democrats, the Republican Leadership has failed to schedule the measure for a vote.

With the passage of last year's FY03 National Defense Authorization Act, those with a Purple Heart indicating a combat wound and at least a 10% disability, and those with at least a 60% disability as a result of combat are permitted to receive both their retirement pay and their disability compensation. However, H.R. 303 would expand this and give all veterans concurrent receipt of their disability and retirement payments, instead of just a small percentage.

"It is critical to stop penalizing our disabled veterans if we are to fulfill our commitment to those who helped build America's strength and security. Disabled veterans have been waiting years for this proposal to become the law of the land," said Congressman Boyd. "The Senate passed this provision last week, and with this petition the House is taking the first step in the fight to make sure that we act quickly to help disabled veterans. Our veterans shouldn't have to wait any longer."